

Wichita Daily Eagle

WORTH A GUINOA A BOX

SPECIAL NOTICE

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AIR SHIELDS US FROM DANGER.

Protecting the Earth from Being Injured by Cosmic Interstellar Missiles.

The sensational statements which were widely published during the recent appearance of a strange comet in Andromeda, and the attention which was drawn to the Biela swarm of meteors at about the same time, served to remind every one of a singular and, in some respects, important office of the atmosphere that we seldom think of. The atmosphere is not only a cover for the earth, serving to keep it warm by retaining the heat derived from the sun, but it is also a shield, which effectively protects the earth against missiles from space. The service which the soft, transparent air thus renders is, indeed, a wonderful one, according to the Youth's Companion. Many thousands of meteors every day run into the atmosphere with a velocity averaging sixty times that of a cannon ball, and yet we are perfectly safe, because they cannot reach the ground except in the form of microscopic particles of dust. But for the resistance interposed by the atmosphere the mortality from meteors might form an interesting list in the general statistics of mankind. It is the excessive velocity of the meteors which leads to their destruction. Making due allowance for the comparative rarity of the air at the great height at which meteors become luminous, the heat developed by their rush of twenty-five or thirty miles in a second must be sufficient to dissipate them almost instantly. In the case of the Biela meteors, it is pretty definitely known that the particles which enter the atmosphere, when the earth in its orbit meets the meteoric swarm, are formed part of the mass of a comet, known as Biela's comet, which split into two parts in 1846, and was last seen in the form of a comet—then a double comet—in 1853. But every year in the month of November, when the earth approaches very near to the path in which the missing comet formerly traveled, and which is followed by the meteors that now apparently represent all that is left of the comet, a greater or less number of these meteoric plagues into the air and are consumed.

SWIMMING ON HORSEBACK.
Some Horsemasters Think Deeper in the Water Than Others.
Swimming horses across a flooded creek or river is a common and on some stations almost daily occurrence in Australia during the rainy season. As a rule I have remained seated in the saddle while swimming my horse across a flooded river, and have found the buoyancy of the horse to vary quite as much as that of a human being, says a writer in the London Field. I have had some horses which could swim with the seat of the saddle clear above the water, while others on the contrary swim so deeply that only the ears, eyes, and nose were visible. In the latter case the sooner the rider slips over the tail the better. If you are not in the saddle I do not think it matters much whether you swim at the horse's head or his tail, or on your back, breast or side. Of course, the nearer you are to his head the better chance you have of guiding him if necessary, but as a rule horses will swim as fast and as straight as they can, to the water's edge, or point. In the whole course of my experience I have never seen but one horse unable or unwilling to swim, and on this occasion the horse turned on his side immediately it found itself in deep water, and, refusing to make the slightest effort, it was drowned. In my opinion the most important thing to do when swimming any horse across a stream is to unbuckle your snaffle rein, and, if riding with a double-reined bridle, cut the stitches of the curb rein. Practically the only danger there is lies in the risk of the horse getting his forelegs entangled in the bridle, which can easily be avoided.

JOHN JACOB ASTOR.
A Clever Inventor and a Credit to His Famous Family.

JOHN JACOB ASTOR.

A Clever Inventor and a Credit to His Famous Family.

Description of His Invention—Many Useful Contrivances the Product of His Genius—His Wonderful System for Producing Rain.

[Copyright, 1892.]

There have been four John Jacob Astors who have demanded the attention of Americans either on account of their wealth, their philanthropy or other circumstances of an unusual character. John Jacob Astor fourth, the great grandson of the first of the name, is not only noticeable as the inheritor of tens of millions of the Astor accumulations, but for another reason, which he revealed to the writer of this article a few days ago, and which is that he lives, moves and has his being in discovery and invention. A pneumatic road-cleaning machine that he has invented and which will be one of the features of the Chicago world's fair, where it will be seen in practical operation, is of



JOHN JACOB ASTOR FOURTH.
From a Recent Photograph.

far more interesting to him than his palatial country home of Ferncliff at Rhinebeck on the Hudson and the whole of the blooded horses that he has raised at his stock farm. His patent improved bicycle brake is of greater importance to him mentally than all the pleasure he can get out of his steam yacht Nourmahal or out of his membership in the riding, racquet and tennis, country, Tuxedo, New York Yacht and Vanderbilt clubs combined. And his method of inducing rain is a much greater delight to him than almost even the addition of millions upon millions of dollars and hundreds of other houses to those that he has inherited from his great-grandfather, grandfather and father-in-law.

Perhaps young John Jacob Astor may change in this particular as he grows older, but at the present time—he is now in his twenty-ninth year—there is no question of his burning enthusiasm for natural philosophy and mechanics. In my talk with him at his residence, 374 Fifth avenue, after straightening out his six feet three inches of anatomy and commanding my attention with a winning glance from his large blue eyes, he said:

"Although my road cleaner and bicycle brake are inventions of which I am very proud, I am far more interested in my rain inducing method. Let me explain in my own way what it is by the aid of this perspective view, illustrating the application of my improved method."
Here Mr. Astor handed the writer the accompanying drawing made by himself, and which he afterward loaned for this interview. Then he proceeded with the following description:
"The volume of a given weight of air depends upon the pressure to which it is subjected. The smaller the pressure the greater will be its volume. The pressure of the atmosphere at the earth's surface is about fourteen and three-quarter pounds per square inch. This pressure diminishes with the altitude. When a mass of air is transferred from the lower to the upper atmosphere it expands by virtue of the diminution of the pressure and becomes cooler. The rate at which this cooling takes place is about one degree for every one hundred and eighty-three feet of ascent. If the air be dry, and somewhat less than one degree for the same distance if the air be moist. Clouds are generally produced by the rising of the heated moist air from the earth's surface and the expansion and cooling of such air in the cooler upper atmosphere, thus effecting the condensation of the moisture and its precipitation in the form of rain. When the air begins to be warmed by the sun the lower stratum of the atmosphere is warmed more rapidly than the higher strata, heat being absorbed by the ground and given out to the air immediately in contact with it. When thus warmed the air below begins to expand, at the same time expanding, and the cooler air above descends. In nature as the air rises it is gradually cooled by expansion, so that it soon reaches the temperature and volume of the surrounding air, but by continuous action of this kind the ascending column reaches higher and higher until it arrives at a height where it is cooled to the point of condensation, when clouds begin to form at the top of the ascending current, and the process continues until the condensation is so great as to form rain."



JOHN JACOB ASTOR'S RAINMAKING MACHINE.
Sketches by himself.

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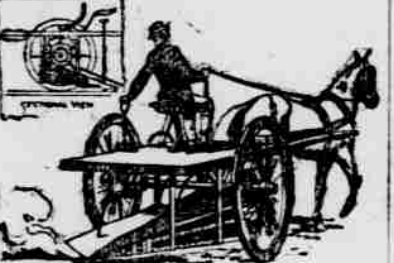
"The object of my invention," Mr. Astor went on to explain, "is to secure this result by artificial means and without the mingling of the ascending column with the surrounding atmosphere until it reaches the prescribed height; and to this end my invention consists in means for transferring the moist warm

atmosphere from the earth's surface to the upper and cooler atmosphere, thus producing the initial action necessary to the production of a rainstorm. In carrying out my invention I do not limit or confine myself to any special form or apparatus, but employ any machinery capable of setting in motion large volumes of air, and I arrange a conduit for conveying the air to the upper atmosphere in any convenient and desirable way, the details of carrying out the invention being controlled to a large extent by the natural advantages of the locality in which the apparatus is placed."

"In the present case"—here the young plutocrat called attention to his sketch given above—"I have shown an air tower erected upon an eminence, such as a cliff or a mountain, and I place in the valley a blower of large capacity, which communicates with the air tower by means of an air trunk of suitable size, and I drive the blower with any convenient power. In the present case I have represented an engine house which incloses the blower and an engine for driving the same. In lieu of such an arrangement I may provide a tower of sufficient height to convey the air directly from the lower to the higher level, and I may arrange the blower and the driving mechanism in the base of the tower, or I may arrange the blower upon the eminence and extend the suction pipe to the lower level, and connect the discharge pipe of the blower into the air tower. The capacity of the apparatus need not be greater than is required to produce the initial disturbance or the nucleus of the storm, as, when the precipitation of rain begins, the storm will increase from natural causes. To augment the amount of moisture in the air trunk I direct the exhaust pipe of the blower engine into the trunk, thereby surcharging the air in the trunk with the exhaust steam of the engine."

Mr. Astor's pneumatic road cleaning machine that will be exhibited at the Chicago Columbian exposition has been in practical operation for some time at his country residence on the banks of the Hudson at Rhinebeck, and where he is also engaged in breeding hackneys, or in less horsey parlance—carriage horses.

When Mr. Astor, after leaving Harvard university, resided in the Orient his principal occupation was making pedestrian tours through Turkey and Greece, with Athens as his headquarters. Upon his return to America he became an ardent wheeler



JOHN JACOB ASTOR'S PNEUMATIC ROAD CLEANER IN OPERATION.

or bicyclist. Later he invented a patent bicycle brake shoe.

So much for the inventions of John Jacob Astor fourth. But he has even more in his mind than the three described. I also learned, during our extended conversation, that since his first cousin, William Waldorf Astor, the author of the novels "Valentine" and "Storrs," seems likely to expatriate himself in England, where he is now basking in the smiles of British royalty and aristocracy, it would result in his (John Jacob's) endeavoring to worthily represent the Astors in the Empire city, he being the only adult male member of the family residing here. I also discovered that the fourth John Jacob proposed, as far as the richest man in the world, to act as the champion of his disinherited uncle, Henry Astor, who married a most estimable lady, Miss Malvina Dinwiddie, and who did not receive what should have been his—third share of the Astor millions—through the hostility of his brother John Jacob Astor third.

There was much more in relation to alleged Astor skeletons in the Astor closet that was shown to be absolutely fallacious. And I also discovered that although John Jacob Astor fourth, being the great-grandson of John Jacob Astor first, was one of the richest men in America, yet he recognized that it had happened to through no consent of his own, and that he proposed to make himself as useful as possible to his fellow American citizens through whatever special gifts and birthrights might be his, and foremost of which, although he was too modest and unassuming to acknowledge it, was the inventive genius of John Jacob Astor fourth.

COLMOTVS.

Another Man's Legs.
At the capitol in Baton Rouge is a portrait of Zachary Taylor with which is connected an amusing reminiscence. While Gen. Howard, the author of Taylor's recent "Life," was looking at the picture, an old resident said to him:

"Why, sir, that's Zachary Taylor's head and shoulders with another man's legs."
"How is that, my friend?"
"Oh, the old gentleman would not sit as a model. When he little thought what was being done the artist sketched his head and body, but as the general declared he could not afford the time for further operations, the painter was obliged to finish with another man."

The result is said to be fairly good. It is a well-executed picture, though the face is neither so fine nor so strong as that of other portraits, and the figure is that of a man somewhat taller than the general—Youth's Companion.

His Busy Day.
Quarryman—Biddy?
His Wife—Phwat do ye want now, sure?
Quarryman—Four some kerosene on th' floor, an' make it hot, so Oi can thaw out me dynamite.—N. Y. Weekly.

Two Birds.
He—Will you marry me?
She—No.
He—Then will you marry Harry Sawyer? He wanted me to ask you for him, too, while I was about it.—Texas Siftings.

Making Him Happy.
Tailor—I am glad you called in, sir. I called the other day when you were out.
Travers—Yes. I heard that you called, so I thought I would come in and order another suit.—Brooklyn Life.

Correspondent.
Miss Simms—Mr. Buifnech has been complimenting me very highly; he said I was the prettiest girl in the room.
Charlie Stringer—I know it; I never saw such a looking set.—Jury.

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The houses given below are representative ones in their line, and thoroughly reliable. They are furnished thus for ready reference for the South generally, as well as for city and suburban buyers. Dealers and inquirers should correspond direct with names given.

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Yard 541 West Third St. Phone 192.
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CAPTURED BY BABOONS.
The Strange Fate of a Woman on a South Sea Island.
One Jasper Higgins, a mariner, has told to a reporter a strange story of Mrs. David Parks, the wife of an American captain, who went ashore with her husband on an uninhabited island in the East Indian seas, lingered behind and disappeared. A long search was made, and it was decided that she had been drowned. But Capt. Parks was not satisfied, and a year later visited the island and made another search.
Here is the testimony of Higgins, who was a member of the searching party:
"There were numerous large trees in the vicinity, and we saw the same old apes eyeing us. Suddenly I saw a strange form, and I called the captain's attention to it. Directly in front of us was a great hollow tree, and by the cavity stood Mrs. Parks. The captain gave a shout of joy and started toward her. As he did so a huge baboon swiftly swung from the limbs and grappled the poor woman. The captain raised his carbine and fired at the brute clutched. We were not over twenty feet away, but before we could overtake our surprise and reach poor Mrs. Parks the powerful baboon had strangled her to death. She never spoke a word from the moment we caught sight of her."
"Capt. Parks was clean daft. He grabbed the corpse and cried and kissed it. Then the wounded baboon stirred, but my sheathknife soon ended it. The chattering in the trees was awful, and I fired my carbine at the apes and monkeys, while the captain cried and kissed his long lost bride."
"Our firing attracted the remainder of the crew and soon they joined us. We sent to the vessel for a shovel and dug a grave by the side of the tree where the poor woman was crushed by her simian captor."

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Too Thirsty to Talk.
"I notice that your husband has never much to say in the morning when he has been out late at night," said the wife's mother.
"No," was the reply of the wife. "He's mum then, extra dry."—N. Y. Press.

My Best Girl.
Although she has all woman's rights, This funny fact remains— When we go sleighing she delights To always hold the reins. —Judge.

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